

ROBERT MENENDEZ  
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# United States Senate

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November 18, 2009

The Honorable Ken Salazar  
Secretary, US Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar:

I am writing to inquire about the domestic offshore energy production activities of the Norwegian-based multinational drilling company called Seadrill Limited ("Seadrill"). As you are aware, Seadrill is the operator of the Australian oil rig that blew out, spilled millions of gallons of oil for over 10 weeks, and then caught fire before finally being plugged on November 3. This spill in the Timor Sea was one of Australia's worst environmental disasters in history. We know that Seadrill is operating at least one rig in the Gulf of Mexico and therefore I am requesting a full investigation of Seadrill and its activities in American waters, so that a similar accident is not repeated here at home.

We have heard much conjecture by the industry that oil drilling accidents cannot happen here in the United States because the technology is too advanced. As a firm that is considered an international leader in drilling, with what is considered one of the "most modern fleets in the world" – Seadrill has proven that accidents do, in fact, happen. It remains unclear exactly what caused the accident in the Timor Sea, and pending a comprehensive investigation being conducted by Australian authorities, it is clear that we must do all we can to ensure that this kind of tragedy is not repeated on our coasts.

It is imperative that we understand the extent of Seadrill's operations here in the United States and ensure they are operating as safely as possible. I therefore request a full investigation of this firm and a careful review of Seadrill's compliance with American safety standards.

Thank you and I look forward to continue working with you to protect our oceans and coasts.

Sincerely,



Robert Menendez  
United States Senator